

retirement from the Plattsburgh City Police Department after 25 years of service.

Originally from Au Sable, New York, Ken entered the Police Academy in 1993 after graduating from Clinton Community College. In 2003, Ken was promoted to the rank of Patrol Sergeant. As Patrol Sergeant, he served on the Special Response Team, which received a mayoral commendation for service in the 2015 Dannemora Manhunt. Soon after, Ken was promoted to Administrative Lieutenant. After 24 years of service with the Police Department, Ken was appointed in 2017 by Mayor Colin Read to serve as Police Chief, where he worked tirelessly to promote community policing and made combating the opiate epidemic a priority. Ken is a lifelong resident of the Plattsburgh area, and is an exemplary member of his community.

On behalf of New York's 21st District, I would like to thank Chief Parkinson for his years of hard work and dedication to his community, and wish him all the best in the years ahead.

MICHAEL VISSER RECEIVES DISTINGUISHED EDUCATION SERVICE AWARD FROM VVC FOUNDATION

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Michael Visser who will receive the Distinguished Education Service Award from the Victor Valley College Foundation on February 24, 2018.

Michael was selected for this award by the foundation because of his commitment to encouraging his students to pursue careers in law enforcement. After retiring from three decades in law enforcement, Michael began teaching courses at VVC and was instrumental in opening the Regional Public Safety Training Center on campus. He also played a vital role in assisting the VVC Campus Police Department in obtaining new firearms and improved training. He has gone above and beyond in supporting the campus by facilitating emergency drills such as "The Great Shake-out" and "Active Shooter Training." Michael's passion for giving back to his students is evident in everything he does.

On behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives, I would like to congratulate Michael Visser for his tireless effort on behalf of his students at VVC. Undoubtedly, he is well-deserving of the Distinguished Education Service Award.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RARE DISEASE ADVANCEMENT, RESEARCH, AND EDUCATION (RARE) ACT

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Rare disease Advancement, Research, and Education (RARE) Act.

This important, bipartisan legislation would address many of the issues facing rare disease patients and families. Today, Rare Disease Day, many of these individuals are sharing their stories and educating communities of researchers, health professionals, governments, families, and friends about how rare diseases affect them. I am proud to introduce the RARE Act not only in recognition of these efforts, but moreover to address the many unique challenges facing the rare disease patient community.

Almost 7,000 rare diseases affect nearly 30,000,000 Americans, and many lack an effective treatment. There remains much Congress can do to improve rare disease awareness, education, research, surveillance, diagnosis, and treatment, and to address common challenges faced by rare disease patients.

Over the course of my time in Congress, I have met with countless rare disease patients and their families. Each story is unique—and in many cases heartbreaking—but it is essential that Congress address some of the root causes behind these stories.

Rare diseases cross the medical spectrum, but individuals with rare diseases face some common challenges. In large part due to their limited patient population size, these individuals may have difficulty obtaining an accurate diagnosis, finding physicians or treatment centers with expertise in their disease, and ultimately finding appropriate treatment options and cures. While over 450 drugs have been approved for the treatment of rare diseases, millions of Americans suffering from a rare disease have no approved treatment options.

For decades, Congress has worked to support advancements in rare disease, with legislation ranging from the Orphan Drug Act to the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act to most recently, the 21st Century Cures Act. In addition, the Food and Drug Administration and the National Institutes of Health have made important strides, prioritizing research, development, and approval of treatment targeting rare diseases. Nonetheless, it remains clear that there remains much policymakers can do to further these critical efforts.

The RARE Act would represent an important step in this direction, addressing some of the commonalities between rare diseases and aiming to improve rare disease treatment, research, and diagnostics.

First, the RARE Act would expand our understanding of rare diseases by enhancing an existing and successful program: the Rare Diseases Clinical Research Network. The Rare Diseases Clinical Research Network at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is made up of 21 research 'centers of excellence' studying rare diseases in an interdisciplinary way, working with patients and others on clinical studies and other research.

Second, the RARE Act would fill critical gaps in our healthcare system, improving coordination, surveillance, and awareness of rare diseases. For example, the RARE Act would require the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to create a National Rare Disease or Condition Surveillance System. Modelled off of similar systems for other conditions, this formalized infrastructure would track rare disease data, helping researchers to understand commonalities between diseases. The RARE Act would also require the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to expand and

intensify its work to ensure that health professionals are aware of rare disease diagnoses and treatments. And it would mandate an updated report on rare disease efforts from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, to ensure that Congress has the best tools possible to address these issues.

Passage of the RARE Act would represent a major stride in combating these unique diseases and conditions, and enhance the federal government, non-profit, and private sectors capacities to improve patients' lives. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the RARE Act.

SUBURBAN SUGAR LAND WOMEN HONOR FORT BEND COUNTY LEADERS FOR WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Fort Bend County women honored by the Suburban Sugar Land Women (SSLW) for Women's History Month 2018.

The National Women's History Project celebrates the diverse and historic accomplishments of women. Every year, SSLW recognizes women who have made a positive impact upon our community. There are six women from Fort Bend County who received this honor—Evelyn Peters Dean, president of the Suburban Houston Fort Bend Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Ammie Blahuta, president of Gigi's Playhouse Down Syndrome Achievement Centers, Tran Pham Rich, president of Cookie Joe's Dancin' School, Sugar Land, Manuela Arroyos, CEO of Fort Bend Seniors Meals on Wheels, Cynthia Ginyard, a passionate retired educator and public servant and Lupe Uresti, former mayor of Rosenberg and current Rosenberg Housing Authority director and treasurer for the board of directors of the Fort Bend Hispanic Heritage Forum. Each of these women contributes to the strength and vibrancy of our community and we thank them.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the Suburban Sugar Land Women honorees. Thank you for all you do for our community.

IN RECOGNITION OF JIM WAGNER'S LIFE OF DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jim Wagner as he retires from a lifetime of distinguished public service to the Downrivers of Michigan. This week he will retire as Trenton City Administrator, but his service has been long and extensive. He has brought our community together for years through his leadership.

A lifelong resident of Wyandotte, Michigan, Mr. Wagner grew up with a passion to serve